COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Colchester, CT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

March 15, 2022 ~ 6:00 P.M.
ZOOM

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice-Chair Mary Tomasi, Secretary Jessica Morozowich, Donna Antonacci, Margo Gignac, Rosemary Gignac, Christopher Rivers

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Superintendent Jeffrey Burt, Director of Teaching and Learning Dr. Charles Hewes, Principal of Bacon Academy Matthew Peel, CFO Maggie Cosgrove, Human Resources Director Shannon Ramsby

OTHERS PRESENT: Board of Finance Chair Andrea Migliaccio, Board of Finance Member Michael Egan

1. CALL TO ORDER
   Chair Oliphant called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT
   None.

3. RECOGNITION/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
   The month of March is Board of Education Member Appreciation Month.
   Superintendent Burt shared a video of Bacon Academy choir students singing and saying thank you to Board of Education members.

4. *PRIORITY DISCUSSION//ACTION ITEMS
   4.1 *2022-2023 Budget Workshop
   Superintendent Burt presented budget questions submitted to the Board of Education; all budget questions and answers are posted to the Colchester Public Schools website under the Education Budget page. Colchester Public Schools administrators were present to help answer questions. Superintendent Burt recommended that the Board consider a 1.17% budget increase ($125,572) based on the recommendation of 3.0 FTE staff reduction at Bacon Academy instead of a 5.0 FTE reduction. Superintendent Burt said he could bring forward different iterations of potential areas of reduction based on the board's desire. Christopher Rivers asked if the

Superintendent could speak to paraprofessionals' roles and responsibilities and how they are utilized. Superintendent Burt will also share historical staffing statistics. Discussion was had in regard to the oil spill at Bacon Academy and potential budget impact going forward. Superintendent Burt said he met with an environmental specialist this week to discuss different remediation strategies. They have not heard back from the insurance company yet but if funds are needed for the project that are not covered they could potentially utilize the unfunded balance. CFO Maggie Cosgrove said anything incurred this year would not be part of next year's budget.

Superintendent Burt presented the proposed reorganization of the finance department. CFO Cosgrove discussed the need for separate dedicated staff for the Board of Education and town. The proposed reorganization would have a Business Director and Accountant fully dedicated to the Board of Education and continue shared benefits, payroll and accounts payable positions with the town.

For the Board of Education workshop next Tuesday, March 22, 2022, Superintendent Burt will provide: recommended/other reductions based on different scenarios of staffing levels at Bacon Academy for both a 1.0% and .87% budget increase, details on paraprofessional roles, historical staffing statistics, curriculum implementation needs and long-term plan, and finance department comparisons.

5. COMMUNICATION

Board Secretary Morozowich shared communications received from the public.

Vice-Chair Tomasi asked to hear from Board of Finance Chair Andrea Migliaccio and Board of Finance Member Michael Egan on the budget.

Board of Finance Member Michael Egan stated he hopes to see more feedback and participation from the public moving forward. He said there was good discussion on the positions at Bacon Academy and how they might affect curriculum and enrollment based on a 5.0 FTE reduction versus a 3.0 FTE reduction. Mr. Egan said the board had good ideas in moving that forward with the 1%. He stated that at the Board of Education and Board of Finance meetings they have been discussing the finance department reorganization and he is looking forward to learning how the hiring process will occur.

Chair of the Board of Finance Andrea Migliaccio stated that she was surprised to learn the Board of Education was potentially making an adjustment to a 1.17% increase but appreciated that the board spoke to it at the meeting tonight. Ms. Migliaccio said that she enjoyed the dialogue tonight and appreciated the finance reorganization discussion. Ms. Migliaccio said she hoped to see more public participation as well.

Vice-Chair Tomasi asked to look at having the Board of Education Meetings on the town website calendar as well to promote participation.

6. *PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT
   The meeting adjourned at 7:11PM.

*POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM